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supersede its alleged necessity, as an Arbiter of Justice among Nations, by the timely adoption of wise and feasible substitutes, respectfully petition your Honorable Bodies to take such action as you may deem best for this most desirable end, by "securing in our treaties with other nations, a provision for referring to the decision of umpires all misunderstandings that cannot be satisfactorily adjusted by amicable negotiation."

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### SKETCHES OF THE VENDEAN WAR.

(Concluded.)

**FINAL ATROCITIES.**—The execution of these gallant chiefs put an end to the first period of the Vendean war. It might then have been terminated, had the Republicans made a humane use of their victory, and sheathed the sword after it had destroyed its enemies in the field. But the darkest period of the tragedy was approaching, and in the rear of their armies came those fiends in human form, who exceeded even the horrors of Marat and Robespierre, and have left a darker stain on French history than the tyranny of Nero or the massacre of Bartholemew. Their atrocities took all hope from the vanquished; and in despair and revenge sprung up a new set of Chouan bands, who, under Charette, Stofflet, and Tanteniac, long maintained the Royalist cause in the Western Provinces, and proved more fatal to the Republicans than all the armies of Germany.

Thurreau was the first who commenced against the Vendéans a systematic war of extermination. He formed twelve corps, aptly denominated *infernal columns*, whose orders were to traverse the country in every direction, isolate it from all communication with the rest of the world, carry off or destroy all the grain and cattle, murder all the inhabitants, and burn down all the houses. These orders were too faithfully executed; the infernal columns pierced the country in every direction, their path might be traced by the conflagration of the villages, their footsteps known by the corpses of the inhabitants. A contemporary republican writer has left this character of their exploits: "It seemed as if the Vendéans were no longer regarded as men; the pregnant woman, the child in the cradle, even the beasts on the field, the very stones, the houses, the soil itself, appeared to the Republican's enemies worthy of a total extermination." But from this atrocious warfare arose new difficulties to the invaders. From the consequences of their ravages, provisions failed equally to them as to their enemies; and the Chouan bands were swelled by multitudes who were driven to despair by the conflagration of their dwellings and the massacre of their relations. Strengthened by such recruits, the unconquerable Charette maintained the contest, and often took a bloody revenge on his enemies. Acquainted with every road and ambuscade in the country, capable of enduring the extremities of hunger, serene in danger, cheerful in misfortune, affable with his soldiers, inexhaustible in resources, invincible in resolution, he displayed in that guerilla warfare the talents of a consummate general. In vain Thurreau sent against him General Haxo, one of the ablest of the Republican commanders; his indefatigable opponent retired before him till he arrived at a favorable place of attack, and then turning to his men and ordering them to halt, "We have retired far enough," said he "now is the time to show the convention that La Vendée still exists." With that they precipitated them-

selves with such fury upon their pursuers, that the column was broken and put to flight, and General Haxo himself slain while bravely endeavoring to restore the combat.

While Thurreau was pursuing with varied success the system of extermination in La Vendee, the scaffold was erected at Nantes, and those infernal executions commenced which have affixed a stain on the French Revolution, unequalled since the beginning of the world. A Revolutionary tribunal was formed there, under the direction of Carrier, and it soon out-stripped even the rapid march of Danton and Robespierre. "Their principle," says the Republican historian, "was that it was necessary to destroy, *en masse*, all the prisoners. At their command was formed a corps called the Legion of Marat, composed of the most determined and bloodthirsty of the Revolutionists, the members of which were entitled, of their own authority, to incarcerate any person whom they chose. The number of their prisoners was soon between three and four thousand, and they divided among themselves all their property. Whenever a fresh supply of captives are wanted, the alarm was spread of a counter-revolution, the *generale* beat, the cannon planted; and this was immediately followed by innumerable arrests. Nor were they long in disposing of their captives. The miserable wretches were either slain with poniards in the prisons, or carried out in a vessel and drowned by wholesale in the Loire. On one occasion, a hundred 'fanatical priests,' as they were termed, were taken out together, stripped of their clothes, and precipitated into the waves. The same vessel served for many of these noyades; and the horror expressed by many of the citizens for that mode of execution formed the ground for fresh arrests and increased murders. Women big with child; infants, eight, nine, and ten years of age, were thrown together into the stream, on the sides of which, men, armed with sabres, were placed to cut off their hands if the waves should cast them undrowned on the shore. The citizens, with loud shrieks, implored the lives of the little innocents, and numbers offered to adopt them as their own; but, though a few were granted to their urgent intreaty, the greater part were doomed to destruction. Thus were consigned to the grave whole generations at once; the ornament of the present, the hope of the future."

On one occasion, by orders of Carrier, twenty-three of the Royalists, on another twenty four, were guillotined together without any trial. The executioner remonstrated, but in vain. Among them were many children of seven or eight years of age, and seven women; the executioner died two or three days after with horror at what he himself had done. At another time, one hundred and forty women, incarcerated as suspected, were drowned together, though actively engaged in making bandages and shirts for the Republican soldiers. So great was the multitude of captives who were brought in on all sides, that the executioners, as well as the company of Marat, declared themselves exhausted with fatigue; and a new method of disposing of them was adopted, borrowed from Nero, but improved on the plan of that tyrant. A hundred, or a hundred and fifty victims, for the most part women and children, were crowded together in a boat, with a concealed trap-door in the bottom, which was conducted into the middle of the Loire; at a signal given, the crew leaped into another boat, the bolts were withdrawn, and the shrieking victims precipitated into the waves amid the laughter of the company of Marat, who stood on the banks to cut down any who approached the shore. This was what Carrier called his *Republican Baptisms*. The *Republican Marriages* were, if possible, a still greater refinement of cruelty. Two persons of different sexes, generally an old man and an old woman, or a young man and a young woman, bereft of every species of dress, were bound together, and after being left in torture in that situation

for half an hour, thrown into the river. It was ascertained by authentic documents that six hundred children had perished by that inhuman species of death; and such was the quantity of corpses accumulated in the Loire, that the water of that river was infected so as to render a public ordinance necessary, forbidding the use of it to the inhabitants; and the mariners, when they heaved their anchors, frequently brought up boats charged with corpses. Birds of prey flocked to the shores and fed on human flesh; while the very fish became so poisonous as to induce an order of the municipality of Nantes, prohibiting them to be taken by the fishermen.

The scenes in the prisons which preceded these horrid executions exceeded all that romance had figured of the terrible. Many women died of terror the moment a man entered their cells, conceiving that they were about to be led out to the noyades; the floors were covered with the bodies of their infants, numbers of whom were yet quivering in the agonies of death. On one occasion, the inspector entered the prison to seek for a child, where the evening before, he had left above three hundred infants; they were all gone in the morning, having been drowned the preceding night. To all the representations of the citizens in favor of these innocent victims, Carrier answered, "They are all vipers; let them be stifled." Three hundred young women of Nantes were drowned by him in one night; so far from having had any share in political discussions, they were of the unfortunate class who live by the pleasures of others. Several hundred persons were thrown every night, for some months, into the river; their shrieks at being led out of the entrepot on board the barks wakened all the inhabitants of the town, and froze every heart with horror. Fifteen thousand persons perished there under the hands of the executioner, or of diseases in prison, in one month; the total victims of the Reign of Terror at that place exceeded thirty thousand.

In another part of his history, Alison gives the following statement:—

"Five hundred children of both sexes, the eldest of whom was not fourteen years old, were led out to the same spot to be shot. Never was so deplorable a spectacle witnessed. The littleness of their stature caused most of the bullets, at the first discharge, to fly over their heads; they broke their bonds, rushed into the ranks of the executioners, clung round their knees, and with supplicating hands and agonized looks, sought for mercy. Nothing could soften these assassins: they put them to death even when lying at their feet. A large party of women, most of whom were with child, and many with babes at their breast, were put on board the boats in the Loire. The innocent caresses, the unconscious smiles of these little innocents, filled their mothers' breasts with inexpressible anguish; they fondly pressed them to their bosoms, weeping over them for the last time. One of them was delivered of an infant on the quay; hardly were the agonies of child-birth over, when she was pushed, with the new-born innocent, into the galley. After being stripped naked, their hands were tied behind their backs; their shrieks and lamentations were answered by strokes of the sabre; and, while struggling between terror and shame to conceal their nudity from the gaze of the executioners, the signal was given, the planks cut, and the shrieking victims forever buried in the waves."

**SOME CASES OF FEMALES.**—The peasants, both men and women, of La Vendee, met death, in general, with the most heroic courage; they perished boldly avowing their opinions, and exclaiming, "Vive le roi! nous allons en Paradis." Innumerable instances of heroism occurred, especially among the female sufferers. Madame de Jourdain was led out to be drowned with her three daughters; a soldier wished to save the youngest, who

was very beautiful; she threw herself into the water to share the fate of her mother, but falling on a heap of dead, could not sink. "Push me in," she exclaimed; "the water is not deep enough," and sunk beneath his thrust. Mademoiselle Cuissan, aged sixteen, of still greater beauty, excited the most vehement admiration in a young officer of hussars, who spent three hours at her feet entreating her to allow him to save her; but as he could not undertake to free an aged parent, the partner of her captivity, she refused life, and threw herself into the Loire along with her mother.

Agatha Larochejaquelein escaped in the most extraordinary manner. She had left an asylum, in a cottage at Brittany, in consequence of one of the deceitful amnesties which the Republicans published to lure their victims from their places of concealment, and was seized and brought before Lamberty, one of the ferocious satellites of Carrier. Her beauty excited his admiration, "Are you afraid, brigand?" said he. "No, general," replied the worthy inheritrix of her name. "When you feel fear," said he, "send for Lamberty." When brought to the entrepot, seeing death approaching, she recollected his words, and sent for the general. He took her out alone at night into a little boat on the Loire, with a concealed trap, which Carrier had given him for his private murders, and wished to sacrifice her to his desires; she resisted, upon which he threatened to drown her; but she, anticipating him, flew to the side to throw herself into the river. The Republican was softened; "You are a brave girl," said he; "I will save you." In effect, he left her concealed at the bottom of the boat, among some bushes on the margin of the stream, where she lay for eight days and nights a witness to the unceasing nocturnal massacre of her fellow-prisoners. At length she was taken from her place of concealment, and secreted with a man of the name of Sullivan, who resolved to save her, from horror at a murder which he had committed on his own brother, whom he had denounced as a Vendean to the Republican authorities. The intelligence, however, of his humanity got wind, and Lamberty was accused some time afterward of having saved some women from the noyades. To prevent the evidence of this in Agatha's case, she was seized by a friend of Lamberty of the name of Robin, who carried her into a boat, where he was proceeding to poinard her, in order to extinguish any trace of his having facilitated her escape, when her beauty again subdued the ruthless murderer. She threw herself at his feet, and prevailed on him to save her life. She was again arrested, however, in the place where he had concealed her, and would certainly have been guillotined, had not the fall of Robespierre suspended the executions, and ultimately restored her to liberty.

The fate of Madame de Bonchamps was not less remarkable. After the rout at Mans, she lived, like all the other wives of the officers and generals, on the charity of the peasants in Brittany, whose courage and devotion no misfortunes could diminish. They at once told their names and connections; the faithful people received them with tears of joy, and not only concealed them in their dwellings, but stinted themselves in their meals to furnish them with provisions. For several days, when the pursuit was hottest, she was concealed, with her infant child, in the thick foliage of an oak-tree, at the foot of which the Republican soldiers were frequently passing; a cough or a cry from the infant would have betrayed them both; but the little creature, though suffering under a painful malady, never uttered a groan, and both mother and child frequently slept in peace for hours, when the bayonets of their pursuers were visible through the openings of the leaves. At night, when the enemy were asleep; the little children of the cottagers; brought them provisions; and occasionally some old soldiers of her husband's army hazarded their lives to render them assistance. She was at

length arrested, and brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal at Nantes; the recollections of the five thousand captives, whose lives the dying hero had saved, could not save his widow from an unanimous condemnation. The atrocious cruelty of this proceeding, however, excited so much commiseration among the numerous survivors who had been saved by his clemency, that the vehemence of their remonstrances obtained a respite from the judges; during which, the peasants who had protected her little girl sent her to the prison, and the mother had the delight of hearing her infant pray every night and morning at her bedside for her health and deliverance. At length, after a long captivity, she obtained her liberation; her daughter was intrusted with presenting the petition to the court; and even the judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal could not withstand the touching appeal made to them by the little child in behalf of its captive parent.\*

**THE VICTORS' ACCOUNT OF THE RESULT.**—A Committee of the National Convention declares, in their report on the subject,—“We may now say with truth that La Vendee no longer exists. A profound solitude reigns in the country recently occupied by the rebels, you may travel far in those districts without meeting either a living creature or a dwelling; for, with the exception of Cholet, St. Florent, and some little towns, where the number of patriots greatly exceeded that of the Royalists, we have left behind us nothing but ashes and piles of dead.”

This statement, if true, affords a startling clue to the probable number of victims in the Vendean war. If La Vendee was really depopulated to such an extent as here stated, and if it had some forty years after, regained a population of 800,000, we may well suppose from the much larger number of inhabitants at the time of the Revolution and from the terrible havoc on both sides, that nearly, perhaps quite *a million lives* may have been sacrificed.

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### JUST VIEWS ON THE FISHERY DISPUTE.

The recent misunderstanding between the English and American Governments respecting the fisheries, has called forth in various quarters such views as indicate a most auspicious and still progressive change of public opinion against war-measures for the adjustment of such difficulties. It would seem, that even war-ships, instead of bristling with hostile cannon, are turned into a sort of peaceful ocean-police; for the war-steamer, dispatched by our President more to satisfy popular jealousy, and silence

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\* A singular accident attended the presenting of this petition. The little girl, who was only six years old, went up to the judges and presented the paper, saying, “Citizens, I am come to ask the pardon of mamma.” Casting their eyes on the paper, they beheld the name of Bonchamps, and one of them addressing her, said he would give her the pardon if she would sing one of her best songs, as he knew she had a voice which charmed all the inmates of the prison. Up on this, she sang with a loud voice the words she had heard from sixty thousand men on the field of battle:

“Vive, vive le roi!  
A bas la Republique!”

Had she been a little older, these words would have condemned both herself and her mother; but the simplicity with which they were uttered disarmed their wrath: they smiled, and after some observations on the detestable education which the fanatic Royalists gave to their children, dismissed her with the pardon she desired.